



GSL ONLINE

Montana's premiere student loan publication

www.mgslp.state.mt.us (800) 537-7508

UPCOMING EVENTS

- *MASFAA Conference:*
April 20-22, Missoula MT
- *MUS Honor Scholarship Reception:*
May 3, Helena MT
- *Memorial Day:*
May 30 (Office Closed)

CONGRATULATIONS!

Cindy Small—
the new Financial Aid
Director at MSU-Northern!

THE DIRECTOR'S DEN

The legislative session is in full bloom and there are a number of University System bills of interest. Amendments were recently made in HB 2 to reduce General Fund appropriations for HB 435, the Governor's Postsecondary Scholarship Program. We don't know yet how this reduction will play out. It's possible that the size of actual scholarships could be reduced (we hope not), or perhaps certain categories of scholarships will be eliminated. While HB 435 is less than we had anticipated, with the additional \$470,000 currently set aside for MHEG, need-based aid has fared well thus far in the session. As things are constantly changing, GSL will continue to keep you updated. In fact, you might want to take a look at the bills we follow on our website. MASFAA is right around the corner and, as you know, I like to give quizzes. I look forward to seeing you all at MASFAA – we have a full agenda to discuss!

Bruce Marks, Director

PLUS ONLINE APPROVAL

MGSLP is pleased to announce the arrival of our Online PLUS Loan Approval Product. This product is a web-based application that determines the credit-worthiness of potential parent borrowers who are attempting to qualify for PLUS loans. Parents access the product from the school's website and on completion of the approval the parent is offered the opportunity to submit a MPN online immediately through FASTPLUS.

Some features of the Online Approval Product are:

- Provides instant response, with credit decision good for 90 days.
- Features the school lender list.
- Schools are notified of credit decision by electronic certification request, email or fax.

We are excited about offering this new product to our Montana schools and will be implementing it in the upcoming weeks. If you have any questions, please call Carie Kelly at 1-800-537-7508.

FAREWELL AND CONGRATULATIONS!



After 34 years of service at Montana State University-Northern and 23 years in Financial Aid, Kris Dramstad has retired. Kris will be starting a new position at the Havre Optometric Clinic and we wish her well in this new endeavor. Ron, Carie,

and Char were in attendance to see Kris off at her retirement party on March 31st. The party included numerous friends and colleagues who showered Kris with the praise and accolades she deserves. We would like to thank Kris for her hard work and dedication while serving the students and families of Montana, the financial aid community and the contributions she made to MGSLP including acting as chair of the Student Loan Advisory Council. We will miss you Kris!

FOCUS ON FINANCIAL AID FOLKS



Just last August, the Montana financial aid community gained a new member. Chris Steckmann has joined us from Mt. Vernon, Georgia, where he worked in the financial aid office at Bewton-Parker College. When asked why he chose Montana, Chris explained that he grew up in the mid-West and he had been trying to move back for years. It was interesting to learn that before he found his way to the financial aid world, Chris studied law enforcement and worked as a fraud investigator. In his 7 months as Director of Financial Aid at the University of Great Falls, Chris has noticed and appreciated the upgraded technology, including the availability of online award letters.

In addition to reading in his spare time, Chris is kept pretty busy with his nine year old daughter. "Happy Father's Day" notes and pictures of her decorated his office. Chris and his wife, Sharon, have been focusing their efforts on fixing up their recently purchased "family farm," where you can find geese, chickens and ducks. While still settling in from the move, Chris and his family are looking forward to camping, canoeing and enjoying other outdoor activities in the area.

Favorite Quote: "People don't care what you know till they know that you care."

-John Maxwell